

Lagana discloses vertical columns divided into a number of cylindrical portions comprising separate stages. However, these stages are separated vertically in the columns (see FIG. 1). This differs from the specific language of the independent claim 5 of the present application, which calls for “a plurality of evaporators connected in series for staged operation in a rising film evaporation process wherein the evaporators are disposed in a compact concentric arrangement”. Since the evaporators of Lagana are not concentric, they cannot anticipate or make obvious the concentric arrangement of applicant’s claims 5-16.

Sephton discloses multiple stacks of vertical tube bundles in series with the stacks connected in parallel, which also fails to anticipate or suggest the concentric arrangement of claims 5-16.

Bitterly discloses a mechanism of radically differing construction from either the prior art or the multistage distillation apparatus of the present invention, which operates with a rising film evaporation process as recited in claim 5. Bitterly does not have tube bundles, as called for in claim 5, but instead provides concentric thin shells rotatable in a housing and forming boiler and condenser structures that distill the water in a manner and with apparatus completely different from the present invention. Accordingly, Bitterly cannot be combined with Sephton to make obvious the concentric arrangement of this invention.


From the foregoing, it should be apparent that the art applied in the previous Office Action discloses apparatuses that are completely different from the concentrically arranged evaporators of the present invention.

Further, in compliance with the notice, it is affirmed that NO NEW MATTER has been introduced into the application by the amendments to the specification and drawings made in the amendment filed on April 2, 2007. Changes made are intended to improve clarity and consistency of terminology between the specification and claims based on the original disclosure and the teachings of the known prior art.

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This paper is believed to be fully responsive to the issues raised in the notice and to place the April 2, 2007 amendment in condition for entry and examination. Favorable action is requested.

Respectfully submitted,  
SERGIO MARTINS COSTA  
Fildes & Outland, P.C.



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Christopher J. Fildes, Attorney  
Registration No. 32,132  
20916 Mack Avenue, Suite 2  
Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236  
(313) 885-1500